14

Informative Speaking
AFTER COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

14.1 Define informative speaking.

14.2 Distinguish among three informative speaking categories.

14.3 Follow guidelines to increase audience engagement and comprehension.

14.4 Apply skills to enhance informative speaking presentations.

Life is very different than it was just a decade ago. We have access to the world’s information wherever we can get a cell phone signal. Establishing connections to information has been simplified for us. The question is this: Are we able to thoughtfully process all the information that is now accessible to us?

SHARING AND CONCEPTUALIZING INFORMATION

Information, when it is turned into knowledge, confers power. Once in possession of, and able to make sense of, the right information, we are able to comprehend what we otherwise might not have understood and accomplish things we otherwise might not have done. But is it possible that we now have the ability to possess too much information? Whereas the amount of information available to us continues to explode, our individual capacities for absorbing information have not increased. Every day, we face a deluge of new, and often conflicting, data. As a result, we are expected to be able to filter, process, and edit all the information we receive.¹

What is more, we have another increasingly important responsibility, which is to conceptualize. In fact, while information remains essential, we are transitioning—moving beyond the information age and into the conceptual age—to a time when people with the ability to understand and interpret meaning, think differently, detect patterns, recognize opportunities, and edit and put the pieces together in new ways will be in demand, especially in professional sectors.² Do you have these skills? Would you like to develop and improve them?

AVOID INFORMATION OVERLOAD OR UNDERLOAD

Becoming a conceptualizer requires that you get a handle on information glut and information anxiety—the psychological stress we experience when information overload confuses
us or makes it difficult for us to make sense of the never-ending accumulation of information.3

Just as serious a problem as information overload is information underload—the failure to provide the members of the audience with sufficient information. Whether because of a lack of research on your part, the erroneous belief that receivers will be unable to understand the information being presented, or an unwillingness to communicate complex information in a way that makes it understandable and relatable, information underload will make your goals as a speaker difficult to achieve.

CAREER BUILDER: ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD

How overloaded with information do you feel? How many of the following statements can you answer with a firm “yes”?

1. My thoughts frequently drift off, making it difficult for me to concentrate on what’s before my eyes.
2. I find myself forgetting what I think I should retain.
3. I feel tired when I think of all the information I have to acquire.
4. I often put off making a decision because I want to get more information.
5. After I make a decision, I wonder if I chose the right option because of all the possible choices I had before me.
6. When I go online, I think about all the other things I have to do.
7. I check my online networks repeatedly, because I’m concerned that if I don’t, I’ll miss something important.
8. I feel like my texts, e-mails, and voice messages pile up, causing me to use up too much of my time trying to keep up with them.
9. I’m distracted by new information, which makes it hard for me to process the information that I already have.
10. It’s hard for me to separate what I need to know from what’s interesting and nice to know.

While many of us experience a normal amount of information overload, for some of us, information obsessiveness becomes debilitating. When it’s never enough, that’s usually too much to process—and could impede rather than enhance understanding, making it less likely that we will transmit knowledge.
MAKE IT RELEVANT

What’s also important is to be able to process and understand information that is not extraneous to our purpose but will add to knowledge. Here, the informative speech has an important role to play in our lives. Our world is filled with informative messages that we depend on. Some of these messages are informal, but others are carefully planned, structured, and rehearsed to achieve maximum impact. Some three quarters of the U.S. labor force hold jobs that require the production, storage, delivery, or interpretation of information. Educators in schools and businesses, sales professionals, medical practitioners, and consultants and managers in a wide array of fields depend on their skill in giving and receiving information for their livelihoods. They all share the need to make their messages clear, relevant, and useful to receivers.

Informative speakers face three primary challenges: (1) to identify information that has importance for others; (2) to put themselves in the position of their receivers and make the information they deliver understandable to them, and (3) to communicate and conceptualize information in ways that create interest, enhance learning, and help audience members remember the messages delivered to them.

Being able to convey information and to conceptualize meaning to others are among the most useful skills you can acquire. That is what this chapter prepares you to do—to share information you have with people who lack it but need it, or who possess it but do not understand it fully. Let’s get started.

TYPES OF INFORMATIVE PRESENTATIONS

What’s going on? What is it? What does it mean? How does it work? These are the kinds of questions that informative speeches answer. Whenever you present an informative speech, your goal is to offer your audience members more information than they currently possess on a topic. Your objective is to update and add to their knowledge, refine their understanding, or provide background.

The main purpose of an informative speech is to educate, not advocate. There is an unlimited number of topics about which we can share information and develop understanding. Whether you are a student, parent, employer, or employee, speaking informatively is a part of your daily life. You likely describe, demonstrate, or explain something to other people regularly. For organizational purposes, we divide informative speaking into the following categories: speeches about objects and ideas, about events and people, and about processes and procedures. Although these categories are far from exhaustive, they represent the most common ways public speakers package information (Table 14.1).
ETHICS AND COMMUNICATION

What Can You Do to Handle the Glut of Information?

What ethical guidelines should speakers use to determine how much data to share with receivers? We live in the age of “big data.” Vast numbers of American workers are paid to gather and interpret the morass of information collected. We possess not only an overabundance of information but also so many competing expert opinions that it becomes virtually impossible for us to apply logical approaches to deliberation and problem solving. For example, well over 100,000 studies now exist on the topic of depression. How is any doctor or patient to even begin to make sense of all that information and craft a treatment plan? Because of a sheer quantity of information, our attempts to draw conclusions often lead to “paralysis by analysis.” How much information is too much information? Could endless information result in perpetual argumentation but no conclusion?

What advice can you offer regarding how to avoid overwhelming audience members with data? What steps might speakers take to minimize the effects of “data smog”?

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SPEECHES ABOUT OBJECTS AND IDEAS

When speaking of an object, we usually describe it and tell about its uses. When we speak of an idea or concept, we typically define and explain it.

Speaking About an Object

An object speech can cover anything tangible—a machine, building, structure, place, or phenomenon (see Table 14.1 for examples). The chosen object (or thing) may be animate or inanimate, moving or still, visible or invisible to the naked eye. Whatever object you choose, the goal remains the same: to paint an accurate and information-rich picture of it.

Once you select an object for your topic, the next step is to create a specific purpose that identifies the particular aspect of the object on which you will focus. The following are sample purpose statements for informative speeches about objects:

- To inform my audience about types of volcanoes
- To inform my audience about the nature of the Egyptian pyramids
- To inform my audience about the anatomy of the human brain

Organizing Speeches About Objects. Speeches about objects lend themselves to topical, spatial, and chronological organizational formats. A topical format allows you to divide your subject into groups or major categories; when speaking about volcanoes, for example, you might focus first on extinct volcanoes, second on dormant volcanoes, and third on active ones. A spatial or physical framework enables you to discuss one major component of the object at a time as you might do when discussing the entrance, antechamber, and burial chamber of an Egyptian pyramid. And finally, a chronological format is most appropriate if you are going to stress how a design or phenomenon evolved over time (e.g., the formation of the Hawaiian Islands).

Whichever organizational framework you select, be sure to review and follow the guidelines discussed in Chapter 12.

Speaking About an Idea

What does the word existentialism mean? What is bullying? What is a hostile work environment? How do we clarify the nature of double jeopardy? In a speech about an idea, also known as a concept speech, your goal is to explain your topic in such a way that audience members agree on two things:

1. The idea has relevance and importance for them.
2. They want you to clarify or elaborate on it.
General or abstract ideas usually work best for concept speeches, as they allow for the most creative analyses and interpretations. For example, you might discuss free speech, Buddhism, or inequality (see Table 14.1 for more suggestions).

When we conceptualize ideas, audience members may have different interpretations of the words we use—primarily because personal experiences influence meaning. This is particularly likely for nontangible topics such as injustice and religion. By using language that is concrete to make your interpretation clear, as well as analogies to increase common understanding, you can help audience members conceptualize your subject similarly.

As with a speech about an object, your next step after selecting a topic is to create a purpose statement. The following are sample purpose statements for informative speeches about ideas:

To inform my audience about the meaning of injustice
To inform my audience about basic tenets of Buddhism
To inform my audience about different philosophies of religion

Organizing Speeches About Ideas. You can easily develop a speech about an idea using a topical order, enumerating and discussing, in turn, key aspects of the idea. For instance, you might explain the ways racial prejudice affects its victims economically, politically, and socially.

Speeches about ideas also lend themselves to chronological development. When speaking about sexual harassment, you might explain how our understanding of the term has changed over time.

Topics such as the meaning of emotional intelligence, shyness, or implicit bias are really speeches of definition. How would you define shyness? You might offer examples of what it feels like to be shy, describe how a shy person behaves, and then go on to discuss shyness’s consequences. On the other hand, you could discuss the causes of shyness and then focus on different types or categories of shyness.
our lives (graduations, funerals) or something that left us with a lasting impression (the Las Vegas shooting, Hurricane Maria). The event you discuss might be one you personally witnessed (a political rally) or one you choose to research (the Constitutional Convention, the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the vote, or the removal of monuments to the Confederacy). Whatever your topic, your goal is to bring the event to life so that your audience can visualize and experience it.

**Speaking About a Person**

If instead of an event, you opt to tell about the life of a person—someone famous or someone you know personally, someone living or dead, someone admired by or abhorrent to all—your goal is to make that person come alive for audience members, to enable them to appreciate the person’s unique qualities, and to help them understand the impact the individual has had on others. In other words, you seek to answer the question: Why is the person worthy of our attention?

A speech on Jeffrey Dahmer would become interesting if the speaker used it to explore the mind of a mass murderer. A speech on Amy Schumer could develop an understanding of comedic originality, and a speech on Salman Rushdie (the author of *The Satanic Verses* and *The Golden House*) could help audiences comprehend the free-speech challenges of writers.

**Organizing Speeches About Events and People**

Speeches on events and people lend themselves to a variety of organizational approaches; chronological, topical, and causal patterns are especially useful. Look to the purpose of your speech to help you choose your organizational approach. For example, if your speech aims to explain the history of an event or person—say Hurricane Maria—you probably would choose a chronological sequence. In contrast, if you wanted to approach the subject from a different angle and discuss, for instance, the social, economic, and political effects of Hurricane Maria, a topical organization would better suit your needs. And if you wanted to inform audience members why Hurricane Maria proved so destructive to Puerto Rico, you likely would choose a causal order.

**SPEECHES ABOUT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

How do you do that? Why does this work? Can I make one, too? When we answer questions like these, we share our understanding about processes and procedures, the third category of informative speeches.

Here are examples of purpose statements about processes and procedures:

- To inform my audience about how photosynthesis works
- To inform my audience about the workings of the Electoral College
- To inform my audience how to change the oil in a car
If you are delivering a “how” speech, then your primary goal is to increase audience understanding of your subject:

- How a Slot Machine Works
- How Colleges Select Students
- How Tsunamis Develop
- How the Jet Stream Works

If, however, you are delivering a “how-to” speech, then your primary goal is to communicate not only information but also specific skills so audience members can learn how to do something:

- How to Cut Your Own Hair
- How to Housebreak a Dog
- How to Avoid Identity Theft
- How to Lobby Your Legislators

There is virtually no end to the list of processes and procedures about which you can speak.

Organizing Speeches About Processes and Procedures

When delivering a speech that focuses on a process or procedure, you probably will find it most useful to arrange your ideas in either chronological or topical order.

Chronological order works well because it naturally reflects the sequence, approach, or series of steps used from start to finish in making or doing something. For example, in a speech on how scientists could save planet Earth from collision with a meteor, you might detail four key steps in the process from detecting the meteor, determining when contact will occur, sending a spacecraft to intercept it, and blowing it up.

Other times, you might find it more useful to discuss the major principles, techniques, or methods receivers need to understand to master the process or procedure. Then topical order is your best choice. For example, you could focus your speech on how scientists prepare for a potential meteor on a collision course with Earth, beginning with their researching the effects of past meteor collisions and then describing what researchers are doing to improve meteor detection technology.
Keep your speech clear and comprehensible. One that contains too many main points, or step after step after step with no logical categorization, usually is too difficult for audience members to interpret and remember. This makes it unlikely they will engage and be able to follow what you’re sharing. By keeping your main points manageable, you facilitate better understanding of the process or procedure.

SKILL BUILDER

Assessing an Informative Speech

Because informative speaking is a prime means of sharing what you know with others, it is essential for speakers to recognize diversity and adapt to difference.

In the following speech, titled “What It Means to Be Deaf,” student Andi Lane addresses a diversity issue when she shares her understanding of what it means to be hearing impaired. Notice how she uses her own experiences as a starting point.

After reading the transcript of the speech, answer these questions:

1. To what extent did the speech’s introduction succeed in getting your attention? To what extent was the speaker successful in achieving closure by tying her introduction and conclusion together?

2. What means did the speaker use to establish and maintain her credibility? Which kinds of information were most useful? Most memorable?

3. Are you now able to understand what it means to be deaf? If so, what did the speaker do to help you internalize such an understanding? If not, what could the speaker have done to promote better understanding?

4. Were the supporting materials that the speaker used effective? How many different kinds of supporting materials did the speaker use? In what ways did these supporting materials facilitate your understanding? Your emotional involvement?

5. Focus on the speaker’s use of transitions. How effectively did the speaker move from one point to the next? To what extent was it easy to identify the speaker’s main points?

6. What did the speaker do to widen receiver appreciation of diversity issues?

7. What might the speaker change to enhance her speech?

8. Based on this transcript, pretend you are the speaker, and develop first an outline and then speaker’s notes to use when delivering the speech.

(Continued)
What It Means to Be Deaf

At the beginning of this year I moved into an apartment.

When I arrived at my new place, my roommate was there to greet me, and she saw my stereo. She got really excited, and she said, “Great you have a stereo for us to listen to.” I laughed and told her that was a pretty funny joke, as I turned and ran up the stairs. But Sarah never knew I said that. You see, Sarah is profoundly deaf and relies upon lip reading as her primary source of communication. Living with Sarah has taught me many things.

Prime among them is this: The deaf and hearing impaired face many problems on a daily basis. My interest in this subject led me to take a basic sign language and communication with the hearing impaired course. In the course I discovered that understanding the deaf culture, learning to communicate with them, and accepting them can alleviate many of the problems that deaf and hearing-impaired people face. Let’s explore these points together.

“What exactly is deaf culture?” you might ask. This is a legitimate question, since even those who are deaf and involved in the deaf culture have a difficult time explaining it. In his book, *Sign Language and the Deaf Community*, William Stokes says that there are several characteristics that can help us define the deaf culture. The deaf culture is closed and limited only to those who are deaf. Members have a common language that they share and common beliefs about others who are deaf and also those who are hearing. They also have shared goals; one of their primary goals is a goal of acceptance—acceptance in employment, politics, and every aspect of life.

It’s also interesting to compare the hearing world to the deaf culture. In deaf culture there’s less emphasis on personal space; people have to be close together in order to read each other’s signs. There’s also less importance placed on time. People are not always punctual; there’s a more relaxed feeling in the deaf culture.

Eye contact is lengthy, necessary, and polite in the deaf culture. Also, when you do introductions—we usually greet each other; we meet each other; we exchange names. In the deaf culture, you exchange first names, last names, and where you attended school.

And my final point, the difference between the hearing world and the deaf culture, is that the hearing world is more reserved whereas the deaf culture is more tactile. An illustration of this is that in the hearing world we shake hands. In the deaf culture—usually they exchange hugs. These are just some of the important differences that Dr. Kenya Taylor, an audiologist, points out.
Daily life is, of course, very different for those who have a hearing problem. Communication is the main distinguishing factor. Sign language is usually taught to children at a very early age to provide them with a sense of vocabulary—a way to communicate their thoughts and ideas.

There are many different types of sign language, and these vary from area to area much as spoken language does, much like a dialect. The two most common types are signed English and the American Sign Language. Sign language, basic sign, is usually taught to beginners and follows the main sentence structure as spoken English does. ASL is used by those who are hearing impaired. It's a shortened, more abbreviated form. While the same signs are used, it's the format that differs, according to Greenburg in his book *Endless Sign*.

As mentioned before, children are usually taught sign language at a very early age. It is later that they acquire lip reading or speech skills, if they acquire them at all. Most deaf people can lip read to some extent. Now, of course, this presents special problems for the person. They must always be alert and aware of what's going on. And imagine being in a dimly lit room or trying to talk to a person who has a habit of looking away. Also, when you are talking to a deaf person they can't hear the sarcasm in your voice; you need to say what you mean.

Nonverbals are important; they pick up information any way they can get it. It's funny, because now I have a habit of flipping on the interior light when I get in my car at night. This is because I'm accustomed to riding with Sarah. Even when she's not in the car, the light's on, because it's impossible for us to communicate without the interior light on.

Right now, I'm going to paint a hypothetical situation for you, and I would like for you to put yourself in it. And it's a situation where you will be trying to communicate with a deaf person. Let's say you're at a restaurant; you're working there. It's a real busy place, the most popular place in town. One night a man comes in, alone, and is seated in the back corner, which is dimly lit. You're in a rush, and you go over to him, and you pour his water. And as you're pouring his water, you say: "May I take your order?" And you look up, and he doesn't say anything. First of all, he doesn't know you are addressing him, and second of all, he has no idea what you said. So you repeat yourself, "May I take your order?" And the man says, "I am deaf." But you don't know what he said because you don't know sign language. He speaks, and you can't understand him, and you're about to panic. In this situation, what you don't need to do is panic. You need to remember that the only difference between you and him is that you can hear and he can't. Communication is always possible, even if you have to point at the menu or write notes.

This leads me into my final point, the importance of accepting those with hearing problems. The more aware we are of the problems faced by the deaf and the greater our understanding, the less prejudiced we are going to be. The main difference, the only difference, in fact, between us—those who can hear and people who can't hear—is that we hear sounds with our ears, while they hear words and expressions with their eyes. And they feel with
The Communication Playbook

GUIDELINES FOR INFORMATIVE SPEAKERS

An effective informative speaker motivates audience members to want to learn more about the topic, communicates the information clearly by providing information balance, emphasizes key points, involves audience members in the presentation, provides information in ways that make it memorable, draws on the strengths of novelty and creativity, and integrates presentation aids.

CREATE INFORMATION HUNGER

One of the informative speaker’s tasks is to ensure that audience members find the presentation interesting, intellectually stimulating, and relevant (i.e., significant or personally

their hearts just like we do. We can’t measure a person’s intelligence by the degree of a hearing loss or the way that they speak. They are our equals.

I have a few tips from The Hearing Instruments, Volume 36, which will help us become more sensitive when we’re talking to a deaf person. First of all, you talk in a normal fashion; don’t shout at them because they can’t hear you anyway. Try to keep your hands away from your mouth, because, of course, if they’re trying to read your lips and your hands are over your mouth, they’re not going to be able to understand you. Chewing, eating, and smoking are considered rude. You want to get the person’s attention before you begin to talk to them, and it’s perfectly acceptable to lightly touch their arm or wrist—somewhere along there. And finally, make sure that the hearing-impaired person is not facing the light. That’s something that we probably wouldn’t think of. But if they’re facing the light, they’re not going to be able to concentrate on communication.

Today I’ve shared with you some background information about the deaf culture, ways in which deaf people are able to communicate, and the importance of accepting deaf people for who they are. In the short time I’ve lived with Sarah, I’ve learned so much. I learned that you don’t talk to her when your back is turned or when you’re in another room. I’ve learned that I can scream as loud as I want to in the apartment, and it wouldn’t make any difference at all. I can achieve the same end result by just telling her I’m upset. And I’ve learned that one of my most dear friends has a profound hearing loss, but I still love her.
You will be more adept at creating information hunger if you have analyzed your audience conscientiously (see Chapter 11). Then, by using appropriate vehicles, you will be able to generate the interest that motivates audience members to listen to you. Remember to use the attention-getting devices shared in Chapter 13. For example, you can tell stories about your own experiences or the experiences of others, you can ask rhetorical questions, or you can draw analogies for your receivers to consider. You also can arouse the audience's curiosity and you can incorporate humor or use eye-catching visual aids.

**OFFER INFORMATION BALANCE**

Your speech will inform receivers only if they are capable of processing the information you are sharing. A common danger in informative speaking is information overload. Information overload occurs when two conditions are met: (1) The speaker delivers far more data about the topic than the audience needs or wants, confusing receivers and causing them to tune out; and (2) the speaker presents ideas in words that receivers don’t understand. Instead of using clear and simple language, the speaker creates frustration among audience members by using unfamiliar jargon or words that soar beyond the listeners’ vocabulary.

On the other hand, speakers who go out of their way to avoid information overload sometimes overcompensate and create a situation known as *information underload*. Information underload occurs when the speaker underestimates the audience’s sophistication or intelligence and ends up sharing with them what they already know.

The goal is to strike a balance, providing neither too little nor too much information. Don’t underestimate or overestimate the audience’s capability. Instead, motivate receivers to want to fill in information gaps.

As you share information, pace, don’t race. When delivering your informative speech, don’t race to see how much new information you can cram into the brains of receivers in a mere 5 to 7 minutes. The real challenge is to know not only what to include but also what to exclude.

**EMPHASIZE KEY POINTS**

As we discussed in Chapter 12, emphasis can be created through repetition (saying the same thing over again) and restatement (saying the same thing in another way). As long as you do not become overly repetitious and redundant, these devices will help the audience process and retain the main points of your speech.

The organization of your speech also can reinforce your main ideas. Remember that you can use your introduction to preview ideas in your conclusion and to help make those ideas memorable. Transitions and internal summaries also help create a sense of cohesiveness.

**INVOLVE THE AUDIENCE**

With so many communication options at their fingertips, contemporary audiences tend to be restless. Public speakers need to work to channel the nervous energy of the members of the
audience who will learn more as they become involved with the material being presented to them. Effective speakers don't view the audience as a passive receptacle. Rather, they work to find ways to let the audience take an active part in their presentation. Say that you’re giving a speech on how to reduce stress. To involve the audience, you might have your receivers try one or two stress-reducing exercises.

MAKE INFORMATION MEMORABLE

Audience members work to understand and remember information that they perceive as relevant to their own lives. You might not have much interest in a speech on the development of bees. If, however, you heard about a new species of killer bee that is resistant to common insecticides and that droves of these bees are on the way to your community, you probably would develop an intense interest quickly.

Similarly, audiences want to learn new information. In this case, the term new means “new to them.” A historical blunder may be new in this sense, and it may be relevant to a college or business audience today.

DRAW ON NOVELTY AND CREATIVITY

An effective speaker looks for ways to approach information from an unusual direction. If you are the fifth speaker that your audience will be listening to speak on the homeless, you must find a different slant or approach to the topic or you may bore the audience from the outset. You might try taking a different point of view—what homelessness looks like through the eyes of a child, for example. Also work to create analogies to help bring a topic home to the audience: “The number of people entering teaching today is diminishing. The teaching profession is like a stream drying up.” Try other ways to complete this analogy. As you prepare your presentation, remember that you’re looking for creative ways of bringing your topic to life for your receivers.

INTEGRATE PRESENTATION AIDS

Presentation aids have important roles in informative presentations. Remember first, though, that you are your primary visual aid. The way you stand, walk, talk, and gesture is extremely important to the effectiveness of your presentation.

Bring objects, or make simple models if you cannot bring the objects themselves. Use PowerPoint charts, graphs, and drawings when appropriate.

In addition, consider using brief video and audio clips to create or sustain audience interest. One student, for example, showed a brief YouTube segment of a chemical reaction that could not have been demonstrated safely in the classroom. Keep in mind that you can find abundant images, charts, and graphs on the Internet and incorporate them into your presentation to help communicate your message.
COMMUNICATION SKILLS
Practice Tips for Achieving Informative Speaking Goals

Being effective at informative speaking will serve you personally and professionally throughout your life. To achieve mastery, continually apply the following strategies.

Select a topic of importance to you and others.
Speaker should bore neither themselves nor their receivers. By acquiring and sharing information that increases knowledge, understanding, and/or skills, you open yourself and others to the excitement of learning.

Use informing approaches appropriate to your subject.
Selecting the right approach will support your efforts to make your message clear and useful to the audience. Integrating definitions, explanations, descriptions, and narratives makes it easier for receivers to learn by helping in transferring information and creating teaching moments that are fun and exciting.

Frame your message strategically to enhance its relevance.
Inform about issues, places, policies, processes, objects, or events that receivers will profit from learning more about. Draw receivers into your speech by making your topic compelling and memorable. Once receivers understand their vested interest, and become involved, their motivation to listen to and learn from you increases.
Take your mind out every now and then and dance on it. It is getting all caked up.

Mark Twain

COMPLETE THIS CHAPTER 14 CHECKLIST

14.1 I can define informative speaking. □

The goal of the informative speaker is to offer audience members more information than they presently have about a topic. Informative speaking aims to update and add knowledge, refine understanding, or provide background.

14.2 I can distinguish among three informative speaking categories. □

Three categories of informative speaking are speeches on objects and ideas, speeches on events and people, and speeches on processes and procedures. In order to develop their speeches, informative speakers enhance them with messages of explanation, messages of description, messages of definition, and messages that tell a story.

14.3 I can follow guidelines to increase audience engagement and comprehension. □

A primary goal of the informative speech is to increase each receiver’s need to know and hunger to receive the information in the speech. To do this, speakers analyze the audience and use appropriate attention-getting devices to generate receiver interest. At the same time that speakers work to create interest in the audience, they also need to avoid overloading or underloading receivers with information.

14.4 I can apply skills to enhance informative speaking presentations. □

Honing the ability to share information effectively also promotes continued personal and professional success. In every informative speech, the right topic, the right approach, and the right frame should work in sync to enhance the sharing and understanding of information.

BECOME A WORD MASTER

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